get up to five years in prison.

HOUSTON POST - 7/21 p. 9A

Arson causes $5,000 damage to famed old book depository

DALLAS (UPI) — Arsonists broke into the Texas School Book Depository building Thursday, spread gasoline across five floors and set fire to the 68-year-old structure where Lee Harvey Oswald waited to assassinate President John F. Kennedy.

Firemen, aided by the vacant building's sprinkler system, extinguished the blaze within 24 minutes.

"There was quite a bit of fire, but the sprinkler system put most of it out," said L. R. McCowan, assistant fire chief.

"It was definitely arson," he said. "We found gasoline cans on five floors and the smell of gasoline was all through the building."

Fire damage was limited to $5,000 but thousands of gallons of water poured from the upper to lower floors and out the front doors as curiosity seekers crowded downtown sidewalks.

Win Anderson, assistant to Nashville businessman Aubrey Mayhew, who owns the building, said he reported the fire.

Fire investigators were not able to determine how the arsonists gained entrance to the seven-story brick building.

The building is supposed to be in the process of becoming a Kennedy Memorial Center. Mayhew bought it in 1971 for $650,000 because "it was cheap." Mayhew claims to own the largest collection of Kennedy memorabilia in the world.

On Nov. 22, 1963, Oswald perched at a sixth floor window of the building and fired the two shots from a mail-order carbine which killed Kennedy and wounded Texas Gov. John B. Connally.